

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 COME-00

OPIC-03 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9333

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 248

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS SU

SUBJ: MAJOR SUDANESE GOVT REORGANIZATION

REF: KHARTOUM 229, KHARTOUM 242 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: NIMEIRI'S CABINET CHANGES HAVE RELIEVED TEN MINISTERS
AND APPOINTED TOP PARTY HEIRARCHS AS KEY REPLACEMENTS.

HIS MOVE HAS BROKEN POWER OF GROUP OF INDEPENDENT-
MINDED SENIOR MINISTER, LIQUIDATED SEVERAL POOR PERFORMERS
AND BROUGHT TOP POLITBUREAU MEMBERS INTO CABINET.

WHILE MOVES BEING INTERPRETED LOCALLY AS SLIGHT SHIFT TO
MORE LEFTWARD DIRECTION, THEIR POLICY SIGNIFICANCE
SHOULD PROBABLY BE READ PRIMARILY IN TERMS INTERNAL
POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN KEY CABINET MEMBERS AND SSU.

NIMEIRI HAS NOW REASSERTED HIS OWN PRIMACY IN THROUGH-
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GOING FASHION WHILE RETAINING KEY AIDES TO OVERSEE

INTERNAL SECURITY (BAGHIR) AND SSU PARTY MATTERS (MAJ. ABUL BASSIM IBRAHIM). FOREIGN POLICY LIKELY TO REMAIN UNAFFECTED, AS WILL RECEPTIVENESS TO PRIVATE FOREIGN INVESTMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. IN FIRST MAJOR GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION SINCE COUP/COUNTER-COUP OF MID-1971, PRESIDENT NIMEIRI HAS ACCOMPLISHED NUMBER OF UNRELATED OBJECTIVES. DEMISE OF FINMIN MANSOUR IS NOW COMPLETE THROUGH HIS REMOVAL FROM POLITICAL BUREAU OF SSU. LOCAL COMMENTS VARY AS TO EXTENT OF HIS CULPABILITY REGARDING CORRUPTION IN NILE VALLEY CASE. HIS OPPOSITION TO NIMEIRI'S OUT-OF-CHANNELS ARRANGEMENTS WITH TRIAD NO DOUBT ALSO A FACTOR. HIS OPPONENTS FOUND GOOD ISSUE TO TOPPLE HIM.

2. ABDALLA AL HASSAN APPOINTMENT TO SECGEN FOR PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC WITH THE PERSONAL RANK OF MINISTER, COMBINED WITH AMALGAMATION OF GOVERNMENT AND PRESIDENCY OFFICES, SUGGEST EFFORT TO MAKE BUREAUCRACY MORE EFFICIENT AND RESPONSIVE TO PRESIDENT'S DESIRES. SAME TENDENCY CLEAR FROM REPLACEMENT WEAK MINISTER IN LOCAL GOVT, EDUCATION, CULTURE AND INFORMATION.

3. WITH VICE PRESIDENT BAGHIR ASSIGNED TO INTERIOR PORTFOLIO AND MAJ. ABUL GASSIM RETAINED AS DEPUTY SECGEN OF SSU WITH ADDITIONAL SENIOR AIDES, TWO BASIS SUPPORTERS OF NIMEIRI POWER HAVE BEEN REINFORCED. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE SOMEWHAT MORE QUOTE LEFTIST UNQUOTE POLITICAL TENDENCIES HAVE COME TO THE FORE WITH APPOINTMENT FOUR NEW MINISTERS FROM "SOCIALIST ORIENTED" PARTY HEIRARCHY. BADR AL-DIN SULEIMAN AND AHMED ABDEL HALIM ARE SAID TO HAVE BEEN "COMMUNISTS" PRE-1971. HOWEVER, THEY APPEAR SINCE UO HAVE SEVERED ANY SUCH CONNECTIONS AND WE THEREFORE DEFERRING JUDGMENT AS MOST OF THE SSU MEN ARE CAREERISTS KNOWN FOR THEIR CAPABILITY TO BEND WITH THE WIND. MOREOVER, NEW MINFIN MAMOUN BIHEIRI RECOGNIZED FOR HIS ABILITY AND GENERAL WESTERN ORIENTATION.

4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT MINISTRY SHAKEUP IS FAR REACHING RESPONSE TO DISSATISFACTION ONBREAD AND BUTTER ISSUES WHICH NIMEIRI HAS NO DOUBT BEEN HEARING INCREASINGLY DURING HIS RECENT CONFIDENTIAL

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TRAVELS WITHIN THE COUNTRY. ELEVATION OF DEPARTMENTS CONCERNING RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS AND YOUTH/SPORTS TO LEVEL OF FULL MINISTRIES SUGGESTS GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL DESIRE TO PROPITIATE IMPORTANT ISLAMIC TRADITIONALIST SENTIMENT AND PAY GREATER ATTENTION RESTIVE STUDENT ELEMENT. LATTER ALSO EVIDENCED BY DROPPING OF WEAK FORMER MINEDUCATION. LATERAL DEMOTION OF MANSOUR KHALID SEEMS ATTRIBUTABLE TO: (A) KHALID'S SUPPORT OF OUTGOING MINFINANCE; (B) KHALID'S

EVIDENT PREFERENCE FOR WESTERN SOCIETY OVER ARAB (WE EVEN HEAR EGYPTIANS HAVE IN PAST URGED HIS REPLACEMENT); AND (C) NIMEIRI'S OWN POSSIBLE INTENTION BECOME MORE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. SUDANESE FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION SHOULD NEVERTHELESS REMAIN CONSTANT. HOWEVER, UFEW MINISTER LIKELY BE NAMED BEFORE LONG AND OTHER CHANGES ARE EXPECTED. FOR EXAMPLE, KHALID HIMSELF NOT LIKELY TO STAY IN EDUCATION JOB TOO LONG, AND IS RUMORED TO BE SEEKING MAJOR POST IN INTERNATIONAL AGENCY.

5. FOUR DISMISSED CABINET MEMBERS (AHMED BABIKER ISA, MUSA AWAD BALLAL, IBRAHIM MONEIM MANSOUR, AND MAHMOUD HASSEB) WERE FROM WESTERN AREAS OF SUDAN, LENDING CREDENCE TO POPULAR VIEW THAT NIMEIRI HYPER-SUSPICIOUS OF WESTERNERS. HOWEVER, ANY CONSIDERATION THIS FACTOR WAS PROBABLY SECONDARY TO PRESIDENT'S MAIN EFFORT TO SHAKE UP ENTRENCHED INTERESTS IN GOVT AND ASSURE THAT HE HIMSELF RETAIN EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF POLICY MAKING.
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